



August 7, 2019

The Honorable Walter Burnett  
27th Ward Alderman  
4 N. Western Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60612

Re: Zoning Change for 311/345 N. Morgan & 1000 W. Carroll

Dear Alderman Burnett,

On Monday, April 8, representatives from developer Sterling Bay; architect Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; and attorney DLA Piper presented a revised concept for 345 N. Morgan and a new proposal for 1000 W. Carroll. **While this project has many positive elements, Neighbors of West Loop does not support the scale and design of the proposed 1000 W. Carroll building.**

The current sites each have low-rise commercial buildings and surface parking lots. The existing planned development for the sites (PD 1282) is zoned as M2-3 with a 3.0 and 5.0 FAR. Under the proposal, floor area ratio would be borrowed from the existing building at 311 N. Morgan (Ace Hotel) to add density and height for the two proposed buildings, which would be upzoned to DX-5 with an 8.1 FAR. This would involve a \$7.6M payment to the Neighborhood Opportunity Bonus. The resulting buildings would include an 11-story (178 ft) office building with 37 parking above-ground spaces at 345 N. Morgan and an 18-story (288 ft) office building with ground-floor retail and above-ground 144 parking spaces at 1000 W. Carroll.

Loading zones would be provided along Morgan for both proposed buildings, with parking and loading access provided from Morgan for the eastern building and from Carpenter for the western building. A three-way stop sign may be provided at Carroll and Morgan to address increased traffic flow in the area. No improvements to the nearby rail crossings were discussed as part of the project.

We offer the following points in regard to this project:

- Our Development Committee is **supportive of the proposed building at 345 N. Morgan**, in particular its design and scale. That said, we are disappointed that the movie theater concept originally proposed for this location (along with the office buildings at 333 and 360 N. Green) was abandoned.
- For 1000 W. Carroll, we are pleased to see the proposed arcade concept with wide sidewalks at the base of the site. We also appreciate the desire to provide ground-floor commercial space, however recent restaurant closings nearby are concerning. We suggest that the building owners offer **reduced rent for the ground-floor commercial spaces** to improve their viability.
- Our committee did not like the proposed scale of the design for 1000 W. Carroll. We feel that it is disjointed and exemplifies the “piling on” of density that many Fulton Market development

proposals exhibit. We note that the Neighbors of West Loop *Neighborhood Plan* allows for buildings above 150 ft for this area. However, the *Plan* also limits the height of proposed buildings to 125% of the height of adjacent buildings, a criterion that the proposal fails to meet. The **removal of the top “piece” of the building** would allow the structure to satisfy this requirement and result in a more visually pleasing design.

- Both projects should provide **ample lighting to promote safety** around the site at night.
- We feel that this project, along with Sterling Bay’s projects nearby on Green Street, will generate a significant amount of pedestrian traffic on either side of the Metra railroad tracks. The City and developer should work with Metra and the Illinois Commerce Commission to **investigate the use of additional safety treatments at nearby at-grade crossings**.

We ask that you help us to resolve these concerns with the developer so a project can be delivered that aligns with the community’s input.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Matthew Letourneau  
Chairperson, Development Committee  
NEIGHBORS OF WEST LOOP

cc: Fred Krol, Sterling Bay  
Katie Jahnke Dale, DLA Piper  
Eleanor Gorski, Chicago Department of Planning and Development  
Neighbors of West Loop Development Committee